4: Pierson Z-4, 5 (1935-1937) 1967
SOll Bahia Brazilians SOll

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men, anxious for a good year's catch, or individuals wishing to be rid of some illness, to obtain employment, or to secure a satisfactory resolution of unrequited love, will purchase foods, wearing apparel, toilet articles, jewelry, and other gifts pleasing to a lady and place them with appropriate ceremonies in a body of water presumed to be inhabited by one of the *mães d'agua*. Particularly sacred are the waters of Mar Grande, off the island of Itaparica, where, a few years ago, a saddle horse, it is said, was presented to Yemanjá; Mont'serrat and Cabeceiras da Ponte, on opposite sides of Itapagipe; Baiutê,[38] near the village of Itapoan; and Mariquita, near Rio Vermelho.[39] Parents of twins make regular food and drink offerings to the twin-deities, the Beji, or Cosme and Damião. Omolú, the "*orixá* of smallpox," is believed to protect not only against the ravishes of this disease

[778] [823] [845] [776] 776 750

[38] A foreigner was swimming in Baiutê when a passer-by, seeing him, shouted excitedly, "What are you doing in there? Don't you know that that water is charmed (*encantado*)? You might even turn into a fish. Haven't you seen the white swans? They say that they are two people who once swam here." For accounts of public offerings to the *mães d'agua* see *Estado da Bahia* for June 19 and September 23, 1936; *A Tarde* (Bahia), February 3, 1938.

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[39] A letter headed, "Every Vow Fulfilled up to the End of the Year, 1936," and addressed to "Our Lady of Mont'serrat, the Mistress of the Sea, Janaina," was found in the bay near Mont'serrat. It read:

To my Godmother:

I promise you, my Lady of Mont'serrat, that if you arrange it so that I can marry Domingos Portella, I will give you a present worth fifty milreis. And on the second of February I will put in another present according to my means. If possible, I will give you thirty milreis, and if not I will give you at least twenty. As large a present as I have I will give you on February 2, from twenty milreis up. My Godmother, I promise thee that the day of my marriage to Domingos Portella will be a happy day for you also; while I shall be having a *festa* here on land, you also will be having a *festa* there in the holy sea. I will fix dishes of all that we have in the house for this day, and send them to you, with greetings from me.

Your goddaughter,

YVONNE D. L. BAHIA

(Letter presented here by courtesy of Friar Tomás.)

4; Pierson Z-4, 5 (1935-1937) 1967
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775 but also against all skin ailments, including leprosy. Particularly approachable is the deity to whom a person is dedicated. "This bad cut on my foot," remarked a *mãe de santo* dedicated to Xangô, "would not heal. So I talked it over with Xangô. He agreed to heal it, and told me what to use. It's now getting well; it's much better already."

755 An individual troubled by continued ill-health, business
789 difficulties, or even bad dreams may request of the fetish-
793 cult priest the ritual of *lavágem das contas*, or "washing the
794 beads." Divination is first resorted to in order to identify the *orixá* "responsible" for the difficulty. Then the beads sacred to this deity are immersed in water, a newly purchased basin being used for the purpose, and a handful of leaves also sacred to him are crushed and added. After a time, the beads are removed and washed with *sabão da costa* ("soap from the Coast"). Thus purified, they are given to the person suffering the ill fortune, who must subsequently keep them in a clay vessel and from time to time wear them about his neck.

755 Considered one of the most effective methods of "remov-
789 ing" a disease or misfortune is the *troca da cabeça*, or "chang-
825 ing of heads," whose purpose is to transfer the disturbing
753 influence from the afflicted person to another individual. The ritual varies. The afflicted one may have his head rubbed with a chicken or a pigeon, which, having thus acquired the evil influence, is then killed. Or an *ebó*, or *bozó*, as it is more commonly called, may be prepared,[31] and the affliction purposely transferred to another individual by leav-

[31] The *bozó* almost always includes a dead hen, popcorn, manioc meal with *azeite de dendê*, pieces of clothing from the one to be benefited, nickel or copper coins, certain African foods like *acassá*, *abertm*, and *acarajé*, and, if available, the African fruits, the *obi* and the *orobó*, of ritualistic significance.